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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Fiftieth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1200th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 12 March 1997, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. BANTON

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS, COMMENTS AND INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 9 OF THE CONVENTION (agenda item 5) (continued)

Ninth and tenth periodic reports of Belgium (CERD/C/260/Add.2)

1. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. de Schoutheete, Mr. van den Bulcke, Mr. Villan, Mr. San't Angelo, Mrs. Degroote and Mr. Bourgoignie (Belgium) took seats at the Committee table.

2. Mr. de SCHOUTHEETE (Belgium) said that every effort had been made to comply with guidelines on the submission of periodic reports to human rights treaty bodies (HR/PUB/91/1). His delegation was aware of the importance of the machinery provided for in the human rights instruments to which it was a party, and of the current financial and other difficulties facing treaty bodies and would do all it could to help ease the situation and comply with any specific initiatives put forward by the various committees or States aimed at rationalizing and improving their efficiency. Particularly in recent years, Belgium had endeavoured to submit reports promptly and the Belgian authorities responsible for coordinating information and drafting reports had been forced to adapt their working methods to ensure that public bodies whose cooperation was essential could be fully involved in their work.

3. The coordinating bodies also had to take account of the scope and complexity of the institutional framework in Belgium, particularly in recent years, following amendments to the Constitution which had profoundly changed political and administrative structures and the distribution of competence and responsibility of public bodies. Those changes were detailed in document HRI/1/Add.1/Rev.1 of 8 February 1995 and summarized in the annexes to the tenth periodic report (CERD/C/260/Add.2). The report tried to explain new provisions which had been introduced in recent years and policies in areas such as education, culture, employment, and housing, which were key sectors in terms of integration. The report mentioned a range of issues and attempts by the authorities to deal with them in the framework of the Government's policy of combating racism and various forms of discrimination. The report had been drafted in the hope that it would stimulate frank and fruitful dialogue with the Committee.

4. Mr. VILLAN (Belgium) said that he wished to explain the recent developments in the policy of the Walloon Region with regard to the integration of foreigners and persons of foreign origin. A decree of 4 July 1996 had defined areas in the Region where coexistence and integration needed to be improved and better organized. The integration policy in the Region aimed to promote partnership between the authorities and the private sector.

5. Each year, the Government of the Region submitted to the Regional Council a report on the integration of foreigners or persons of foreign origin. The decree provided, inter alia, for coordination, assessment, training and information at the province and commune levels through regional centres responsible for integration. A government committee also assessed the

work of such centres. Support and subsidies were provided for local initiatives in the area of social development to promote the integration of foreigners or persons of foreign origin.

6. Mr. DIACONU (Country Rapporteur) welcomed the high-level delegation sent by the Belgian authorities and the additional information provided in the introductory statement on the implementation of the Convention.

7. The Committee took note of the changes to the Constitution that had been made since Belgium's eighth periodic report. Amendments included those to the Act of 30 July 1981 on the prevention of acts of racism and xenophobia which, inter alia, increased penalties for such acts, modified the definition of discrimination and replaced the concept of national or ethnic origin by the concepts of origin or nationality. The reasons why the Act had been amended, namely that it was not widely known and seldom enforced, that prosecutors had adopted a passive attitude towards offences under the Act and that penalties under the Act were too lenient, were of interest to the Committee. However, it would be useful to know whether the situation had changed and why the authorities had seen fit to introduce the concepts of origin or nationality, terms which seemed less precise than those used in the Convention and could, therefore, make the goal of the elimination of racial discrimination more difficult to achieve and affect the full implementation of the Convention. The Committee would also like to know why only certain acts of racial discrimination were punishable under the Act and would welcome recent statistics on court cases and their follow-up.

8. Another important development in Belgian legislation was the Act prohibiting the denial, minimization, justification or approval of the genocide committed by the German National Socialist regime during the Second World War. He invited the delegation to explain further how both Acts were enforced and, particularly, how they related to the press. He asked whether complaints against acts mentioned in them could be dismissed by the courts or whether they could refuse to pass them on to the Courts of Assize, in the case of complaints against the press. If there were problems in enforcing the legislation, were there any plans to amend article 150 of the Constitution? It would be interesting to know how other Western European countries distinguished between press offences involving racism and racist propaganda.

9. The Committee had noted with interest the establishment of the Centre for Equal Opportunity and Action to Combat Racism and its sphere of competence. He asked whether the Centre had any influence on Parliament and the Government.

10. From the report it seemed that Belgian legislation established equal rights for foreigners in the area of employment and other social and economic matters. He requested information on the attitude of the public in general to foreigners, including tourists.

11. The report perhaps overstressed legislative provisions relating to refugees and foreigners who wished to settle in Belgium. There was concern at the situation of persons such as those of Moroccan, Turkish, Italian or other origin, many of whom had acquired Belgian citizenship and were therefore, technically, no longer foreigners. Similarly, were there cases of racial

discrimination in the three Regions against persons from other Belgian Communities? What was the situation in the 27 border communes, and were there cases of linguistic discrimination?

12. The Migration News-Sheet of February 1997 mentioned that complaints to the Centre for Equal Opportunity and Action to Combat Racism had risen to 90 per month in 1996. He requested information on the kind of complaints and follow-up action. He also asked whether there was any trend towards racial segregation in Belgium and, if so, what the authorities were doing to eliminate it.

13. The report had little information on the implementation of article 4 of the Convention. However, Belgium's eighth periodic report had made it clear that organizations which incited and encouraged racial discrimination had not been declared illegal. He wondered whether any new legislation had been introduced in order to comply fully with the terms of article 4.

14. As to article 6 of the Convention, paragraph 69 stated that statistics on the question of offences which qualified as racist did not accurately reflect the true situation since, in most cases, the phenomenon of racism manifested itself through an ordinary offence such as homicide, arson or assault, the racist intention being lost because attention was focused on the crime. He asked whether it was the fault of persons taking particulars of an offence or the courts themselves that the racist element in such cases was not highlighted.

15. The information relating to article 7 showed the large number of initiatives and measures in the area of education and information. Of particular interest were measures to alert journalists to the dangers of racist or discriminatory connotations in their reports, the activities of teachers and the support provided to immigrants' organizations.

16. With reference to paragraph 75, he asked for clarification of the legal status of the Declaration on Non-Discrimination in Elementary Education, and how it related to schools in practice, and information on whether they respected it and whether persons who felt they had been discriminated against could take their complaint to court. He also asked whether there was still a subsidized Muslim school in Belgium, how many schools gave mother-tongue courses and what languages were used.

17. The same section of the report described Belgium's integration policy for immigrants. It should be made clear whether the term "immigrants" covered persons who did not yet have Belgian citizenship or persons who had become Belgian citizens but were of another ethnic origin.

18. It was worth noting that the Flemish Community and the French Community had different approaches, the former allowing minority groups to express their own culture and ethnicity as a group, whereas the latter tended to integrate individuals from such groups into the community and to assimilate them. Did not such a disparity in the approach of the two Communities create excessive differences of treatment and cause dissatisfaction at the local and federal levels?

19. Another question concerned the place of the Convention in Belgian legislation. According to a reply given by the delegation of Belgium in 1992, the Convention was not "self-sufficient" and was not directly applied in Belgium. Yet in 1995, during the consideration by the Committee on the Rights of the Child of the report of Belgium on implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Belgian delegation had stated that that Convention was directly applicable under Belgian law. If Belgium recognized the primacy of the Convention on the Rights of the Child over Belgian national law, then it should do the same for the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

20. Was Belgium giving consideration to ratifying the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities?

21. The Committee would like to know whether the Government of Belgium consulted the relevant national NGOs and whether it informed them of the content of Belgium's latest report? If not, he hoped that Belgium would cooperate with such organizations more closely in the future.

22. Mr. van BOVEN said that Belgium was currently going through a period of great emotional distress for reasons not unrelated to the Convention. He noted the recent demonstration of solidarity in connection with the case of a girl of Moroccan origin who had been raped and murdered and drew attention to the courageous remark by Prime Minister Dehaene that there might have been a racist element in the failure to investigate the case effectively and expeditiously. The attitude which held that a person's worth differed depending on whether he or she was European or non-European was unfortunately encountered throughout Europe.

23. He pointed out that the Committee's concluding observations on Belgium's previous report had not been referred to in the report currently under consideration, and he urged Belgium to take them into account when preparing its reports in the future.

24. It was important for information discussed in the Committee to be accessible in Belgium. In that context, he was surprised to receive a communication from the Belgian League of Human Rights, which was affiliated with the International Federation of Human Rights, stating that in spite of its official request addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 17 January 1997, it had been unable to obtain a copy of Belgium's tenth periodic report. He assumed that that was due to a bureaucratic misunderstanding and that the oversight would be remedied.

25. He had a number of comments to make concerning specific paragraphs. Paragraph 69 reproduced the statement by the Minister of Justice that statistics on acts of racism did not accurately reflect the true situation because, in the majority of cases, the phenomenon of racism manifested itself through an ordinary offence such as homicide, arson or assault, the racist intention being lost because attention was focused on the crime. In his view, that argument was not convincing, especially as the statistics published by the League of Human Rights, which it had quoted from a response by the Minister of Justice to a parliamentary question, suggested that the prosecuting authorities did not pursue complaints energetically because they

rarely resulted in a conviction. In his view, it was high time for the Attorneys-General to take the matter seriously and create machinery for monitoring complaints. He looked forward to reading in the next report what follow-up action Belgium had taken.

26. He welcomed the recent establishment of the Centre for Equal Opportunity and Action to Combat Racism, which was discussed rather briefly in paragraphs 17-20, and requested more information on its important activities. He noted in that regard that paragraph 20 of the report by the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism and racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance (E/CN.4/1997/71) provided statistics from the 1995 report of the Centre that were consistent with those contained in the Migration News Sheet, which Mr. Diaconu had cited. It would be useful to know more about the nature of the complaints lodged, the complaints procedure itself and the kind of redress offered if complaints were well-founded.

27. He urged Belgium to consider establishing the body referred to in article 14, paragraph 2, of the Convention or at least making the declaration under article 14, paragraph 1. He was interested to learn that the Centre was also in charge of preparing Belgium's reports to the Committee. He took it that the Government of Belgium assumed responsibility for its contents. What role did the Centre play in the European Year against Racism proclaimed by the European Union (EU)?

28. Turning to paragraph 23, he said that, as he understood it, article 18 bis of the Act of 15 December 1980 authorizing the King to prohibit for a limited time the temporary or permanent residence in certain communes of aliens other than EU nationals and assimilated persons was no longer being applied; he hoped that that article would be repealed.

29. In connection with paragraph 31, he was aware that the period for which aliens could in certain circumstances be held pending expulsion had been extended to eight months. That was tantamount to a violation of article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights. There was a tendency in many countries to criminalize people and deprive them of their liberty, although they had committed no offence. An illegal alien was not a criminal.

30. In 1975, when Belgium had ratified the Convention, it had made a declaration on article 4 saying that a balance needed to be struck between the elimination of racial discrimination and freedom of association and expression. Given the persistence of racism and the adverse impact of racial violence and hatred on society, he wondered whether Belgium would strike a different balance today; many European countries had amended their legislation to strengthen the application of the Convention.

31. Lastly, he observed that the General Assembly had adopted an amendment to article 8, paragraph 6, on financing; it would help strengthen the Committee if Belgium joined other States parties in ratifying it.

32. Mr. VALENCIA RODRIGUEZ noted that, according to paragraph 3 of the report, Belgium was the only country in the world whose Constitution

recognized the autonomous capacity of its federated entities to conclude treaties. For his part, he would continue to assume that Belgium as a federal State was the only entity responsible for fulfilling the obligations which it had entered into under the Convention.

33. With regard to paragraph 10, he asked why Belgium had replaced the concept of "national or ethnic origin" by the concepts of "origin" or "nationality" and what the legal consequences of that amendment were, particularly with regard to article 1 of the Convention.

34. Turning to paragraph 11, which explained that the Act of 23 March 1995 had filled a gap in the Act of 30 July 1981, no provision of which had prohibited the denial of or apology for crimes against humanity or war crimes, he inquired whether there had been any cases before the Belgian courts in which such acts had gone unpunished. He would like to receive more information on what had led to the adoption of the 1995 Act.

35. He was pleased that article 150 had been included in the list of articles of the Constitution to be revised and that the Government of Belgium intended to invite Parliament to consider the question of penalties for offences against legislation on the press (para. 16 of the report). Had there been any recent developments on that matter?

36. He welcomed the establishment of the Centre for Equal Opportunity and Action to Combat Racism (para. 17) and looked forward to hearing more about the results of its activities. Another positive step had been the setting-up of training programmes for the police and gendarmerie and criminal investigation officials (para. 20). That could have an important impact in everyday life. There again, he would like to know whether the initiative had been successful.

37. With regard to paragraph 26, he requested more details on the criteria for considering requests for asylum. Concerning paragraphs 33 and 34, he inquired whether there was any supervision to ensure that the authorities did not make excessive use of legislation to prevent marriages of convenience. And in connection with paragraph 35, what measures had been taken to combat illegal immigration?

38. He also wished to know more about the types of post in the Flemish government departments to which non-EU citizens could be recruited, as stated in paragraph 45. He drew attention to paragraph 55 and the importance of the Act of 28 June 1984, which terminated the Belgian nationality requirement for the staffing of certain associations. He asked what results had been achieved since that Act had entered into force.

39. The launching of the "European Passport against Racism" and the "Schools Without Racism" campaigns were both positive measures taken by Belgium pursuant to article 7 of the Convention.

40. Referring to a number of terms used in the context of the Government's immigration and integration policies, he asked for clarification of the following: "integration" and "public policy" in paragraph 89; "nomad children" in paragraph 101; and "risk group" in paragraph 115. In his opinion, the

references, in paragraphs 93 and 98 respectively, to "Anglo-Saxon and Latin strategies and approaches" to integration and the concept of "black" and "white" schools were discriminatory.

41. Mr. de GOUTTES observed that Belgium provided an interesting example of the coexistence of two strategies on the integration of foreigners, and was curious to know whether, on the basis of the information available, it was possible to determine which of the two approaches had produced the more successful results.

42. He invited the delegation to comment on a report submitted to the Committee by the Belgian League of Human Rights, which alleged that there were discrepancies in the implementation of the Convention, and that some formulas used to designate foreigners might have a negative impact. Proposals made by the Centre for Equal Opportunity and Action to Combat Racism had not been adequately implemented, in the League's opinion. The League had also been critical of the Act of 30 July 1981 on the prevention of acts of racism or xenophobia, describing it as insufficient and poorly enforced. It would be useful for the Committee to have an update on information on that and any other pertinent legislation.

43. Denial of evidence of crimes against humanity had sparked a difficult debate in the international community and he wondered whether cases had arisen pursuant to the Belgian Act of 23 March 1995 passed to deal with the same issue. He also referred to paragraph 15 of the report on obstacles to the prosecution of offences against the legislation on the press, and asked whether those obstacles concerned particular acts of racist denial or all racist offences, as provided for under article 4 (a) and (b).

44. With regard to article 6, paragraph 69 acknowledged the dearth of statistics on offences categorized as racist in character. As stated in that paragraph, in most cases racist acts were prosecuted as ordinary offences and the racist intent was lost. He therefore asked whether in Belgian law the charge concerned the racist intent and not the racist act as an autonomous offence.

45. He inquired about the roles of the Centre for Equal Opportunity and Action to Combat Racism and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the preparation of the periodic report and asked what was the nature of cooperation between the Centre, NGOs and government authorities.

46. Finally, he pointed out that there was no incompatibility between the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination with regard to the acceptance of complaints. He wished to know where Belgium currently stood on the issue of the declaration provided for in article 14 of the Convention.

47. Mr. ABOUL-NASR, commenting on paragraphs 11 and 12 of the report, said that, if his interpretation of those articles was correct, the Act of 23 March 1995 was discriminatory in so far as it related to the victims of Jewish genocide during the Second World War, to the exclusion of the genocide committed against other groups throughout modern history.

48. Mr. SHERIFIS welcomed the establishment of the Centre for Equal Opportunity and Action to Combat Racism, which was consistent with a specific recommendation adopted by the Committee in 1993. He looked forward to hearing more about the functions of the Centre and its contribution to the objectives of the Convention. He asked the delegation to clarify information given in the core document on Belgium (HRI/CORE/1/Add.1/Rev.1) in 1995 relating to coordination between the Centre and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the drafting of the periodic report. He also asked for clarification of the term "displaced persons" as used in paragraph 28 of the tenth report with reference to Yugoslavs in Belgium.

49. The tenth report, coupled with the core document, was extremely interesting and useful; nevertheless, he hoped that the next report would adhere more closely to the reporting guidelines established by the Committee.

50. With reference to the enjoyment of the rights provided for under article 5 of the Convention, he asked for confirmation that the rights of freedom of movement and residence and the right to own property applied to all members of the three linguistic communities in Belgium. He requested the delegation to explain the participation of persons living outside the region from which they originated in the election of officials to the Community Council. It was also unclear from the core document how the Communities were represented in the civil service and diplomatic service at the federal level.

51. Mr. WILLEMS (Belgium) thanked the Committee for the keen interest it had taken in the periodic report, as evidenced by the number and depth of the questions it had put to his delegation. His delegation was, of course, willing to continue its frank and open dialogue with the Committee by providing the most comprehensive responses possible. The Committee might detect some differences between Communities, but it should be borne in mind that all aspects were covered by the same federal framework.

52. Mr. SAN'T ANGELO (Belgium), responding to comments and questions about the Centre for Equal Opportunity and Action to Combat Racism, said that the Centre had been established in 1993 as a permanent body to succeed the Office of the Crown Commissioner for Immigration Policy, whose mandate had been limited to four years. Among its wide range of functions were many of direct relevance to the Convention. Much of its work consisted - and increasingly so - in receiving and handling complaints. In addition to the Centre's headquarters in Brussels, there were now 12 branches throughout Belgium, which made it more accessible to citizens. The branches both received complaints and performed a watchdog function. Great importance was attached to close partnership with NGOs working in the field and local authorities. Where possible, the Centre endeavoured to work through mediation in an attempt to find amicable solutions to the wide range of complaints filed. Where attempts at mediation failed, however, it was also now legally authorized to bring claims before an examining magistrate. The main reason for the increase in the number of complaints was that the 1981 Act and the work of the Centre were now more widely known. The Centre had also prepared the judicial ground through its contacts and ongoing relations with prosecutors' offices, which had appointed a judge responsible for liaison with the Centre in the areas under their jurisdiction, thus assuring follow-up to complaints. For instance, the Centre would be advised in advance of any indication that the

Prosecutor's Office might wish to drop a case, and could then have a final meeting with the Prosecutor's Office in an attempt to pursue the case. Many complaints were now being processed and the Act was well implemented through the Centre's activities; any delays in handing down sentences were more the result of the slowness of judicial proceedings in general.

53. The Centre had also made a number of proposals for further amendments to the 1981 Act, considering that the 1994 amendments, though positive, did not go far enough. It was particularly concerned, for instance, to amend the legal procedure concerning the prosecution of offences against the legislation on the press and hoped that its proposals to that effect, now being examined by the Government, would soon lead to an amendment. Its proposals focused on introducing penalties for offences against the legislation on the press and amending the procedure whereby only the Courts of Assize had jurisdiction in such cases. Other proposals concerned the furnishing of evidence and aggravating circumstances. A crucial mechanism in ensuring follow-up to the Centre's proposals was the regular interministerial conference for immigration policy chaired by the Prime Minister, for which the Centre set the agenda and which resulted in firm commitments for action by the ministers. The Centre was not a consultative body but a central motor in political decision-making.

54. The Centre drafted the basic text of Belgium's periodic report to the Committee. That text was then transmitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for coordination with the various ministerial departments, especially those of the Regions and Communities, which would add to it data not available to the Centre. In drafting the report, account was taken of the Committee's previous observations. Pursuant to its statute, the Centre worked in close, constant cooperation with NGOs, organizing regular round tables and working groups. If the Committee so wished, it would consider the possibility of submitting the next draft report to NGOs for comments. The final report could also be made available to NGOs, together with the Centre's annual report.

55. Mr. VILLAN (Belgium) drew attention to the additional document which had been circulated to members concerning the integration policy pursued in the Walloon Region, pointing out that all entities were associated in the preparation of Belgium's report to the Committee. A suggestion that could be taken up in the future was to submit the report to the interministerial conference before transmission to the Committee.

56. Mr. van den BULCKE (Belgium) said, with regard to the direct applicability of the Convention, that it was true that most of the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child were directly applicable in Belgium, while those of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination were not. Since 1971, the primacy of international treaty law was recognized in regard to the provisions of international conventions having direct effect. The reply to the crucial question of which provisions had direct effect lay in the wording of the provision concerned. If an obligation or right was formulated in such a way that a person could invoke a specific, well-defined right, the provision would have direct effect and have primacy over any provision in domestic law.

57. On the subject of the current debate in Belgium on the functioning of the police and judicial authorities, he said that the issue was an important

one because the procedure was such that it was the police and judicial authorities that handled the investigation and prosecution of complaints about discriminatory acts. Plans to modernize the judicial apparatus had already been initiated by the previous Government and had been taken further by the present Government as a matter of priority. Since the emergence of several scandals involving, in particular, child abuse and murder, a wide-ranging political debate involving all sectors of society had been launched, and the functioning of the police and judicial apparatus was being examined in depth. Proposals were already under preparation and included providing the Ministry of Justice, together with the Public Prosecutor's Office, with more effective means for directly initiating proceedings for the prosecution of complaints concerning racial discrimination.

58. Regarding the Constitution and the organization of the State, it was true that the Constitution recognized the competence of Belgium's federated entities to conclude treaties, but it also clearly provided for consultation between the Communities, Regions and the Federal State, to ensure the continuity of international obligations, and for State responsibility in the event of non-execution of international treaty obligations.

59. As to the division of responsibility and competence between the various entities, particularly with regard to freedom of movement and residence, there was no such thing as a nationality attaching to a particular Community. The citizens of Belgium were Belgian nationals and could settle freely anywhere on Belgian territory. There were special rules governing election to the legislature of a Region or Community and membership of an executive, but residence was the main criterion. There was also no distinction on grounds of membership of a Community in regard to access to public service, the main criterion being the capacity of a person to perform the requisite duties, which was determined through examinations. A knowledge of languages was obviously crucial in such examinations. With the exception of certain specific posts relating, for instance, to public order, there was also free and effective access to posts in the public service by persons of foreign nationality from the EU countries, and also, for contractual posts, by non-EU citizens.

60. The training of police officers was considered extremely important in preventing racial discrimination. Aware as it was that, in addition to training, more regular contact was needed with members of foreign communities and that problems of racism existed within the police, the Ministry of the Interior, together with the Centre for Equal Opportunity and Action to Combat Racism, were now running schemes to encourage the recruitment of persons of foreign origin to the police.

61. There had been a decrease in the number of asylum-seekers in Belgium in recent years. That did not necessarily mean that illegal immigration had declined, although there was no indication of a rise in such immigration. The criteria followed when examining a request for asylum were based solely on those provided for in the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. In Belgium, all applications for asylum were and would be examined and all decisions could be appealed. The only exception was that a person entering

Belgium on a visa issued in another Schengen-area country and applying for asylum would be transferred to that country, whose authorities would be responsible for examining the application.

62. The criteria for being accorded the status of "displaced person" differed from those provided for in the above-mentioned Convention and had originally been introduced to ease the workload of the bodies responsible for examining asylum applications. Usually, that status had been accorded primarily to refugees from war zones.

63. It had been suggested that Belgian policy tended to criminalize foreigners or illegal immigrants. In fact, the Government's policy was carefully calibrated, the guiding principle being to strengthen the services and bodies responsible for facilitating access to and residence on Belgian territory. Immigration by those who qualified under the rules in force was still fairly substantial.

64. The CHAIRMAN invited the Belgian delegation to resume its replies at the following meeting.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.